

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW COMMUNIQUE DENOUNCING SECRET DIPLOMACY

REFS: A) PANAMA 652

B) PANAMA 543

SUMMARY. A COMMUNIQUE CRITICAL OF THE GOP'S HANDLING OF CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS WAS BROADCAST OVER RADIO IMPACTO FEBRUARY 1. THE COMMUNIQUE, WHICH REPORTEDLY WAS SIGNED BY OVER 200 PERSONS, MAINLY STUDENTS BELONGING TO GROUPS WHICH HAD IN THE PAST EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO THE KISSINGER-TACK AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES CALLED FOR AN END TO "SECRET DIPLOMACY" AND FOR DISCLOSURE OF THE CONTENT OF THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS FOR DISCUSSION BY THE PEOPLE. THE COMMUNIQUE ACCUSED THE U.S. OF PERMANENT AGGRESSION. THE SIGNATORIES VOWED THEY WOULD NOT ALLOW HYPOCRISY OR BETRAYAL OF THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE BY THE GOVERNMENT. THE STUDENT GROUPS IDENTIFIED WITH THE COMMUNIQUE DO NOT INCLUDE THE MAJOR PANAMANIAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION,

THE PANAMANIAN STUDENT FEDERATION (FEP), NOR DO THEY REPRESENT A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMMUNIQUE IS THAT IT ADDS TO THE SURGE OF PRESSURES ON THE GOP TO REVEAL THE SUBSTANCE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

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1. THE MONTH OF JANUARY WITNESSED A RESURGENCE OF OPPOSITION TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THE GOP IS CONDUCTING THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AND TO THE COMPROMISES THAT, ACCORDING TO RUMORS, ARE BEING MADE BY PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATORS. CRITICISM OF THE GOP WAS REFLECTED IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT FRONT (FER) ON JAN 9, A SERIES

OF BROADCASTS OVER RADIO IMPACTO CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING

OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, THE MANIFESTO PUBLISHED JAN 26 (SEE REFTELS), AND NOW A COMMUNIQUE SIGNED BY MORE THAN 200 PERSONS, INCLUDING THE LEADERS OF SEVERAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS. THIS LATEST COMMUNIQUE-- "DECLARATION TO THE PEOPLE"--WAS BROADCAST BY RADIO IMPACTO ON FEB 1. ACCORDING TO THE BROADCAST THE COMMUNIQUE HAD ITS ORIGIN AT A MEETING CONCERNING THE CANAL ISSUE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA ON

NOV 18, 1974. THE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH THE MANIFESTO WERE THE GUAYACHUKO, THE CAMILO TORRES GROUP, THE LAW STUDENT CENTER, THE STUDENTS' UNITY MOVEMENT, THE ECONOMIC STUDENTS'

UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION, THE SCIENCE STUDENT UNION, THE FEDERATED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, AND THE SOCIALIST LABOR FRONT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ECONOMIC STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION AND THE SCIENCE

STUDENT UNION, THE ABOVE-LISTED GROUPS HAD ALREADY MADE KNOWN THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AS EMBODIED IN THE KISSINGER

TACK 8 POINT AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES. THE BROADCAST ALSO SAID SOME REPRESENTATIVES OF PEASANT UNIONS HAD SIGNED THE COMMUNIQUE.

2. THE COMMUNIQUE DEMANDS THAT THERE BE TRUE AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THE MASSES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS "NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED BEHIND THE PEOPLE'S BACK". THE SIGNERS ASSERTED THAT THE PEOPLE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL "SO-CALLED WORK PAPERS ARE IN HAND" BEFORE THEY ARE OFFICIALLY TOLD WHAT THEY ALREADY UNOFFICIALLY HAVE LEARNED THROUGH THE PRESS. ANYTHING RELATED TO THE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE PUBLICLY REPORTED AND ANALYZED IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF FREEDOM.

3. U.S.-PANAMANIAN RELATIONS WERE DESCRIBED IN THE COMMUNIQUE AS A "HISTORY OF PERMANENT AGGRESSION". IN 1903, THE DOMINANT CLASS HAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SURRENDERED INTERESTS OF THE FATHERLAND IN EXCHANGE FOR BENEFITS FOR THEIR "VULGAR PRIVATE INTERESTS" AND PANAMA HAD BECOME AN APPENDAGE OF THE UNITED STATES STATE DEPARTMENT. THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN PANAMA HAD PERMITTED THE "BRUTAL PERPETUATION OF A SYSTEM OF ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION, NOT ONLY ON PANAMANIAN TERRITORY, BUT THROUGHOUT THE AMERICAN CONTINENT". THE "YANKEE IMPERIALISTS AND THEIR DOMESTIC ALLIES" HAVE WRITTEN A HISTORY THAT CAN ONLY BE SUMMARIZED AS "TREASON AND AGGRESSION".

4. THE SIGNERS OF THE COMMUNIQUE VOWED THEY WOULD NOT ALLOW THE FINAL CHAPTER OF THIS HISTORY TO BE WRITTEN WITH DISREGARD FOR THE PEOPLE. THEY APPEALED TO THE PEOPLE TO BE ALERT TO ANY ATTEMPT BY "YANKEE IMPERIALISTS AND THEIR DOMESTIC ALLIES" TO SACRIFICE PANAMANIAN INTERESTS ONCE AGAIN. THE POPULAR MASSES, WITH OR WITHOUT WEAPONS, SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY WILL NOT TOLERATE HYPOCRISY WHEN NOT ONLY THEIR DESTINY BUT THEIR HONOR AS A SOVEREIGN PEOPLE ARE AT STAKE. THEY WERE CALLED UPON TO WRITE THE EPITAPH OF U.S. IMPERIALISM AND PANAMA'S EXPLOITING CLASS.

5. COMMENT. THE COMMUNIQUE REPRESENTS THE ATTITUDES OF THOSE PANAMANIAN WHO ESPOUSE THE "TRUE NATIONALIST" APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS, ACCORDING TO WHICH PANAMA SHOULD HOLD OUT FOR TREATY TERMS NOT EMBODYING MANY OF THE COMPROMISES, EXPLICIT OR IMPLIED, IN THE KISSINGER-TACK AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES. WHILE WE HAVE NO PRECISE ESTIMATE OF THE PERCENTAGE OF PANAMANIAN STUDENTS AND PERSONS IN OTHER SECTORS OF PANAMANIAN SOCIETY WHO HOLD THIS VIEW, THE STUDENT GROUPS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COMMUNIQUE DO NOT REPRESENT A MAJORITY OF THE STUDENT BODY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA. HOWEVER, THE LEADERS OF THE DOMINANT STUDENT ORGANIZATION AT PANAMA CITY'S LARGEST SECONDARY SCHOOL, THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, WERE AMONG THE COMMUNIQUE'S SIGNERS. THE RADICAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS CAN BE EXPECTED IN THE MONTHS AHEAD TO TRY TO EXPLOIT THE CANAL ISSUE TO WREST THE CONTROL OF FEP FROM THE HANDS OF MORE MODERATE STUDENT LEADERS WHO HAVE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE GOP. THE RISE IN PUBLIC CRITICISM OF TORRIJOS' HANDLING OF CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, AND ESPECIALLY THE LATEST COMMUNIQUE, IS A WARNING TO TORRIJOS THAT HE MUST COME UP WITH A DRAMATIC VICTORY OR RISK BEING CLASSIFIED AS A TRAITOR BY SOME ELEMENTS OF PANAMANIAN SOCIETY.

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